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SUMMER SCHOOLS.

WE copied, into the last Number of the Journal, an admirable article on the use of the slate, in schools of young children ; and we earnestly recommended to the teachers of our Summer Schools, to follow its suggestions, in their practice. By so doing, we believe there will be a vast economy of blows and tears. An amount of scolding, too, which, under the old system of giving the children nothing to do, would be expended in a single term, will, under the new plan of occupying their minds usefully and pleasantly, last a teacher her whole lifetime. Dullness invades a school, when no work is provided for the scholars, as certainly as darkness covers the earth, when the sun is set.

For the further benefit of the dear little souls, (the whole tens of thousands of whom, we daily feel, nestling and snuggling in the warmest corner of our heart,) we now copy from an English book, entitled, 'Model Lessons, for Infant School Teachers and Nursery Governesses,' the first two chapters of the 'Lessons on Objects.' Boxes of objects, specially prepared to accompany the lessons, have long been in use, in some of the best Infant Schools and schools for young children, in Great Britain ; but we should be happily disappointed to learn that a single one of them is to be found in any public school, in the State of Massachusetts. From the 'Lessons,' however, which we give below, an ingenious teacher will at once comprehend the plan, and she will then easily find objects, and adapt her questions to them. Should she be less successful, on the first trial, than she desires and has expected, let her not be discouraged and abandon her purpose ; for the plan is good, and her ability to use it will improve by practice.

We will notice a few of the advantages of this mode of training children.

1. It tends to open their minds to a perception of the vast number of existences, with which the bounty of the Creator has filled the earth. The bodily appetites of children tend to circumscribe their observation and knowledge to the classes of objects by which those appetites can be gratified. Out of the whole number of objects in the world,—so vast, as to defy inventory or computation,—a child who is the slave of his appetites perceives but few. Sweetmeats, custards, and plumcake, are, to him, the principal substances in Nature ; and the difference between large and small slices constitutes, in his view, the main distinction between good and evil. Now, an early cultivation of his perceptive powers, by seeing, hearing, handling, tasting, smelling, (according to their different natures,) a great variety of objects, counteracts the tendency of the appetites, and opens his mind to the marvellous assortment of substances, with which the world is furnished, and to the wide differences between them.

2. Such teaching gives to a child distinct ideas of *qualities*. How often do we meet with adults, who seem never to obtain a clear image, or mental copy, of those qualities of objects, which are communicated to them by their *senses*. They have a complement of the senses ; the laws of light

faithfully fulfil their part, by making the proper impression on their organs of sight ; the laws of sound do the same, in regard to their organs of hearing ; and the same also is done, in regard to all the other senses ;—but all these impressions seem not to be made on a living, receptive brain, but on a mass of dead matter ; and hence, such persons go through life, with almost as little perception of the innumerable things which have been soliciting their attention, every day, as though they had been bereft of the senses common to man. Physically speaking, having eyes, they see not, and having ears, they hear not ; and so it follows, of course, that they do not understand.

3. In addition to the knowledge of substances and qualities, this course of teaching will give children a facility in using the words, which are descriptive of the objects they examine. To make a child acquainted with a new object or quality enlarges the number of his ideas, that is, it increases his knowledge ; and to give him the names of the objects and qualities, as they are respectively presented to him, increases, to the same extent, his power over language. But this is not all ; it tends to secure the true relation and proportion, which should exist in every one's mind, between words and ideas. Educated in this way, the child will have an appropriate word for each idea he possesses, and a correct idea for each word he hears or meets ; and, therefore, he will enjoy a great superiority over that small class of persons, who have more ideas than words, and a still greater advantage over that large class, who have more words than ideas. An adoption of this practice with the present children would save the next generation from an order of men, with whose ideas it is always Lent, and with whose words it is always Carnival.

4. It will be the best preparation for taking some of the earliest steps in the study of grammar, and will make the introduction to that science pleasant, and not repulsive, as it so often proves to be. All language is concerned with substances, qualities, actions, and relations. Grammar teaches how to use language with propriety ; but grammar cannot be acquired without a previous knowledge of substances, qualities, actions, and relations, to denote which, language is used. How easy and pleasant it will be, after a child has become familiar, for instance, with the substances and their qualities, which are described in the annexed Lessons, to give him the most clear and distinct comprehension of the nature of nouns and adjectives ; and, as these should be taught before the other parts of speech, (because substances and qualities must exist, before actions and relations,) it is beginning the study in the right way.

5. There are many men amongst us, who are wholly unable to recollect the dimensions, forms, heights, lengths, breadths, colors, &c., &c., of the objects they have actually seen. Their ideas are dim, half-formed ; and often, when they endeavor to revive them, they will not reappear. Hence it is, that honest men often give false testimony, in court. Witnesses contradict each other ; they expose themselves to a charge of perjury ; and the only reason, why their evidence is not perjury, is, that it was not given with the intent to falsify. Their testimony violates truth, though it is free from corruption ; but to the party, against whose interest, or character, or life, it is given, it does all the mischief of downright perjury. The immediate cause of this is a feebleness in perceiving and recollecting objects, as they actually exist, or events, as they actually have happened ; but the origin of it was laid far back, in a neglect to use their faculties, in childhood. We make use of the very ideas, and almost quote the words, of another, in saying, that there are three states or degrees of activity, in the faculties of the mind, which are brought into use, on these occasions. The first or lowest degree of activity consists in the power of perceiving an object, whatever it may be, when it is actually present. The second degree is an ability to recall the image or idea of the object, in its absence ; so as, for instance,

to revive, in their original force and distinctness, the features of a man or of a landscape, or the air of a tune, long after they were seen or heard. The third or highest degree of power includes not only a capacity to take accurate impressions, when the object is present, and also a strength of retention, so that the idea of the same object may be revived in the mind, undimmed and unmarred, long after the original has passed away ; but it includes an ability to recombine old ideas into new forms. For all practical purposes, it is sufficient to possess the power in the first and second degree. Artists must possess it in the third. Now, there is scarcely a child, in whom it cannot be cultivated, at least to the second degree of power. For this, parents and teachers are responsible.

“ LESSONS ON OBJECTS.

“ FIRST WEEK.

“ LESSON I.—FLINT.—What is this ? A flint. What is a flint ? A stone. Where do you find stones ? In the earth. Look at this flint, and tell me what you see ? It is black. (Teacher holds up the flint.) What do you all say to the color of the flint ? It is black. Repeat together,—flint is black. What do you see, besides ? It shines. All of you repeat,—the flint shines. Do you think a piece of flint would make a good window ? No. Why not ? We could not see through it. What can you say of the flint ? We cannot see through it. All repeat,—we cannot see through flint. Show me some other things, which you cannot see through. The walls, the slates, &c. Now, pass the flint about, and feel it. What can you tell me about it ? It is hard ; it is cold. Repeat together,—the flint is *hard* and *cold*. What more do you observe ? It is smooth. Repeat,—the flint is *smooth*. Feel the edges. They are sharp. Repeat,—the edges of the flint are *sharp*. (Teacher strikes a piece of flint and a piece of steel together.) What am I doing ? Striking the flint and steel together. What do you see ? Sparks of fire. What caused the fire ? Striking the flint and steel together. Repeat together,—flint strikes fire with steel. Have you not seen this, before ? Yes ; when mother lights her fire in the morning. What is one use of flint ? Flints are useful to strike fire. Where have you seen flints together, in heaps ? By the roadside. What were they put there for ? To mend the roads. Why are flints useful to mend the roads ? Because they are very hard. Tell me the second use of flints. To mend the roads. Repeat together the two uses of flints, which you have just mentioned. Flints are used to *strike fire*,* and to *mend the roads*. Now, repeat all that has been said about flint. Flint is *a stone* ; it comes out of the *earth* ; it is *black* ; we cannot see through it ; when we touch it, we feel that it is *cold, hard, smooth, and sharp at the edges* ; it is used to *strike fire*, and to *mend roads*, because it is *hard*.

“ LESSON II.—WATER.—What is in this cup ? Water. (Teacher pours a little on a piece of paper, or linen.) What has the water done to the paper ? Made it wet. Now, watch me. (Teacher pours it out in drops.) What does the water come into ? Into drops. Tell me how the water is unlike the flint ? The flint does not make the paper wet ; it does not come into drops. Whatever you can pour out, and make into drops, is called a liquid. Water is a *liquid* ; tell me some other liquids. Beer, milk, &c. Now look into the cup of water,—What do you see ? There is a little mark at the bottom of the cup. (Teacher shows them another cup, with a similar mark, at the bottom.) Here is another cup, with the same mark at the bottom ; look at it, (pours in a little milk;) look at the mark, again. We cannot see it. Why not ? You have poured some milk over it. But

“* Teachers are to observe, that, throughout all these lessons, the words printed in *italics* are supplied by the children, according to the elliptical plan of teaching.”

here is some water over the mark, in this cup, and yet you see it,—how is this? We can see through the water. What then can you say of water? We can see through water. Find some other thing, in the room, which you can see through. The glass. Look at the water, again. It shines. Yes, it is bright. All of you repeat,—water is *bright*. What color is the flint? Black. What can you say of the water? Look at these colors, (showing a red wafer, green leaf, &c.;) which of the colors is it like? Not any, teacher. What, then, must we say of it? Water has no color. (Teacher calls upon some of the children to taste the water.) What do you observe? It is cold. What taste do you find?—You cannot tell me. Is there any taste in it? No. What, then, can you say of it? It has no taste. Repeat, together,—water has no taste. What use have you made of water, to-day? We washed ourselves with water. What quality have you found in water, that makes it useful for washing? It is a liquid. Beer is a liquid,—why do you not wash in beer? We should smell of the beer. Then you prefer washing in water, because it has no smell,—what other objection is there to washing in beer? It would not make us clean; it would leave a brown stain. Why, then, is water a good liquid to use in washing? Because it has no smell nor color, and it cleanses from dirt. When are you glad to have some water? When we are thirsty. Tell me, then, another use of water? To drink. Water is of great use to every one,—tell me some liquid that we can do without? Beer, gin. What liquid cannot we do without? Water.* Which can we easily get? Water. Yes, as every one needs water, God has kindly supplied every country with it. I think this will be enough for our lesson, to-day. Repeat, together, what you have found out about water,—water is a *liquid*; we can see *through it*; it is *bright*; it has no *color*; nor any *taste*, nor any *smell*; it is *cold*. It is used for *washing*, and for *drinking*; and, because water is necessary to man, God has given every country an abundant supply of it.

“LESSON III.—WOOL.—What is this? Wool. Look, children, this is wool; where does wool come from? It comes off the sheep’s back. What sort of thing is a sheep? An animal. What is wool, then? Part of an animal. Of what use is the wool to the sheep? To keep him warm. Can the sheep make its own wool? No. Who gave the little sheep this warm clothing? God. Yes, God gave the sheep this warm clothing, because it cannot make any for itself. Now, pass this wool about; look at it, and feel it, and tell me what you can find out about it. It is soft. Repeat,—wool is soft. It is all hairs. Do you all see the hairs? Yes. Repeat, then,—wool is formed of hairs. How does it feel unlike the water? It is dry. Repeat,—wool is dry. What more? It is warm. Does it feel warm, when you touch it, like fire? No. What do you mean? It keeps us warm. Repeat,—wool keeps us warm. Yes, it keeps us warm, because it prevents the warmth of our bodies from passing away from us. Who can tell me what wool is used for? To make stockings, and flannel. What is that very thick flannel, you have on your beds? Blankets. Do you know any kind of clothes made of it? Yes, father’s coat. And what have some persons on their floors, to keep their feet warm? Carpets. Carpets are made of wool. Now, repeat all you have said of wool,—wool comes off the sheep’s back, the clothing which God gave him, to keep him warm; wool is soft, dry, and formed of hairs; it keeps us warm; it is made into stockings, flannel, blankets, and carpets.

“LESSON IV.—A PIECE OF BARK.—What is this? A piece of bark.

“* The teacher might introduce some remarks upon the goodness of God, in supplying every country with the liquid so essential to our comfort; whilst the noxious spirit is obtained at expense, by art and labor.”

Look all of you at it,—this is a piece of bark. Where do we find bark ? On a tree. On what part of the tree ? On the stem. Which part of the stem ? look and see. (Teacher brings in a bit of stem, with the bark.) On the outside. Repeat together,—bark is the outside part of the stems of trees ; look at it ; what do you see ? It is brown. Repeat,—bark is brown. Look again, is it like the water ? No, we cannot see through it. What can you say of it, then ? We cannot see through bark. Look at it again, and at the water. It does not shine. When any thing does not shine at all, it is called dull ; what is the bark ? It is dull. Repeat,—the bark is dull. Show me some things in the room that are dull ? Now feel the bark. It is rough. What more ? It is dry. Look at it, (teacher separates the fibres;) it has strings, or hairs. These strings, or hairs, are called fibres, and we call the bark fibrous. Repeat,—the bark is fibrous. Some plants have very fibrous stems, and are very useful to us, on this account ; here are some of the fibres of hemp,* and here some flax, which supplies much of our clothing ; you shall have a lesson upon them, some day. I think you could find out something more, by feeling the bark. It is hard. Now repeat all you have said. Bark is the *outside covering of a tree* ; it is *brown* ; we cannot *see through it* ; it is *rough, dull, dry, hard, fibrous*.

“LESSON V.—Here are the four things upon which you have had lessons this week ; tell me their names. A flint, water, wool, and a piece of bark. Tell me how the water is different from all the others. It makes things wet, and comes into drops. What do we call any thing that forms drops, and wets ? A liquid. Water is *liquid*. Find out something more in the water, different from the other things. We can see through it. All repeat,—we can see through water. What, then, must you say of the other three things ? We cannot see through them. Repeat together,—we cannot see through *flint, wool, or bark*. Now find out something in which the wool differs from the others. It is soft. All repeat,—wool is *soft*. Any thing more ? It comes off an animal. You say wool is soft ; which of these is the hardest ? The flint. Which is next hardest ? The bark ; and the wool is *soft*. Which is the brightest of these objects ? The water. Which next ? The flint. Are either of the others bright ? No. What are they, then ? Dull. Repeat together,—water is very bright ; flint is less bright ; wool and bark are dull.

“ SECOND WEEK.

“LESSON VI.—A FEATHER.—What is this ? A feather. What kind of thing does it come from ? A bird. How do you think a bird would feel, without its feathers ? Very cold. What use, then, are feathers to birds ? To keep them warm. What do we wear to keep us warm ? Coats, frocks, pinafores, &c. What do you call all these together ? Our clothing ; and feathers are the clothing of *birds*. You had a lesson, the other day, upon the clothing of another animal ; what was it ? Wool. What animal did it come from ? The sheep. Wool is the clothing of the *sheep*, and feathers are the clothing of *birds*. Now, look at this feather, (the teacher throws it up in the air;) what do you see ? It flies about. If I throw this halfpenny in the air, would it do the same ? No, teacher, it would fall to the ground. Why does the feather float in the air, and the halfpenny fall to the ground ? Because the feather is light, and the halfpenny is heavy. I wish some of the elder children to tell me, why such a light covering as feathers is best suited to birds ? Because they have to fly in the air. Yes ; and if they had very heavy clothing, they would *fall down*. We see,

“* Teachers should not only bring into the school the particular object upon which the lesson is given, but every substance alluded to should be in readiness for the children's inspection.”

then, that the great God, who is in heaven, takes care even of little birds. He tells us, in His Holy Word, that not a little sparrow falls to the ground without His knowing it ; and, if He observes every thing that the little birds do, and takes such care of them, will He, do you think, forget you or me ? No, no, dear children ; He knows every thing that you do, and every thing that happens to you ; and, in the same place where He speaks of His care of the sparrows, He says, much more will He take care of his children. You shall learn this verse, and then, I hope, when you see the little birds flying about so happily, you will remember that God, who takes such care of them, will never forget you. But now examine the feather ; part of it is white, and part of it is brown ; here is another, this is green ; what, then, do you find, as to the color of feathers ? They are different. You may say, then, feathers are of different colors. Pass the feather about, and find out something about it. It is soft. Is every part of the feather soft ? No, not the part in the middle. What is that ? Hard. That part of the feather is called the shaft. All repeat,—the shaft of the feather is hard. What other difference is there between the shaft and the downy part of the feather ?* The shaft shines, and the downy part does not. What do you call things that shine ? Bright. And things that do not shine ? Dull. Then the shaft of the feather is bright, and the down is dull. What other difference do you perceive ?—feel the feather. We cannot easily bend the shaft. Do any of you know what we call things that cannot be easily bent ? I think you must have heard ; but attend, and try and remember what I say to you ; things that cannot easily be bent are called stiff ;—tell me some things that are stiff. Wood, slate. And what can you say of the shaft of the feather ? It is stiff. Yes, the shaft is stiff ; you cannot easily bend it ; but the down you can *easily bend*. Hold up the feather to the light ;—we can see through it. Can you see through the feather itself ? No, between the parts of it. But, if I put all the parts of the feather close together, what do you find then ? We cannot see through it. What use do we make of feathers ? For beds. Why do they make nice beds ? Because they are soft. Why are they a good clothing for birds ? Because they are light. Feathers are then useful to us, because they are *soft* ;† they are useful to birds, because they are *light*, and keep them *warm*. Did you ever see a feather stuck in a piece of wood ? Yes, teacher. What did it make ? An arrow. Why was the feather put in the wood ? To make the arrow fly the right way. You shall now repeat all that you have said about feathers. Feathers are the clothing of *birds* ; God has given them a very *light clothing*, that they may fly in the *air* ; God takes care of the *little birds*, much more will He take care of *us* ; feathers are of different *colors* ; the shaft of the feather is *hard, bright, and stiff* ; the downy part is *soft and dull*, and we can easily *bend it* ; we cannot *see through the feather* ; feathers are used to *stuff beds*, because they are *soft* ; and for *arrows*.

“LESSON VII.—LEAD.—What is this ? Lead. Can any of you tell me where lead comes from ? Does it come from an animal,—is it part of a plant ? Where does it come from ? It comes out of the earth. God has not only given us animals and vegetables, to be useful to us ; but He has put a great many things into the earth, for our use. Tell me one of them. Lead. Now feel this lead ; what do you find ? It is heavy. Look at it, and tell me what you see. Part of it is very bright, where it has been just cut. And what is the other part ? Dull. Repeat,—lead, when fresh cut, is bright ; when it has been some time in the air, it becomes dull. Look at it, again. It is gray. Feel it. It is hard. When you touch it,

“* As feathers vary very much, the qualities will depend much upon the particular one chosen for the lesson.”

† [Feathers make nice beds, it is true, but, for health’s sake, they should always have a good hair mattress over them.—ED.]

you find it hard ; but, look what I am doing. Cutting it. Well, then, say,—lead is hard to the touch, but is easily cut. (Teacher puts some of the lead into the fire ;) what happens ? It melts. (Puts some into water;) does it melt in the water ? No, teacher. When does it melt ? When it is put into the fire. Repeat, then,—lead melts in fire. Where did the lead go, when I put it into the water ? It fell to the bottom. Would the feather have done so ? No. Why did the lead sink ? Because it is heavy. You knew it was heavy, before ; how did you find it out ? We felt it heavy in our hands. Is there any child here, whose father works in lead ? Yes,* John's father works in lead. What is he called ? A plumber. People who work in lead are called *plumbers*. Well, John, tell us what your father does with lead. He makes windows. What sort of windows,—like the schoolroom windows ? No, windows with little bits of glass. Where have you generally seen such windows ? In great houses, or in cottages.† What was the use of the lead, in these windows ? It fastened the pieces of glass together. What have our windows, for this purpose ? Wood. And what is used to fasten the glass to the wood ? Putty. But, in casement windows, what is used ? Lead. Yes, lead is used to fasten the glass together. Now, John, what other use does your father make of lead ? He makes pipes. All who can tell me what is the use of leaden pipes, hold up your hands. For water to run in. Yes, to carry water from one place to another. Hold up your hands again, all who can tell me any other use of lead. For cisterns. What is the use of cisterns ? To hold water. What use do fishermen make of lead ? They put it on their nets. What use is the lead ? It makes the net sink. Why ? Because it is very heavy. You shall now repeat all you have found out about lead. Lead comes out of *the earth* ; when it is fresh cut, it is *very bright* ; but after it has been in the air for some time, it becomes *dull* ; it is *very heavy* ; the color is *gray* ; it is *hard to the touch*, but it is *easily cut* ; when put into the fire, it *quickly melts* ; when put into water, it *sinks*. The people who work in lead are called *plumbers* ; they use it to fasten together the *glass of casement windows* ; they make *pipes*, to *convey water*, and cisterns of lead, to *hold it*. Lead is also used in *fishermen's nets*.

“LESSON VIII.—LOAF SUGAR.—Now, you can all tell me what this is, which I hold in my hand. Sugar. What kind of sugar ? White sugar. Those who can tell me what sugar is, hold up their hands. You remember where lead came from ? Out of the earth. And the feather ? From off the bird. Now, I will tell you about sugar ;—it is made from the juice that comes out of the stem of a plant. Here is the picture of the plant, and some day you shall have a lesson upon it. The plant is called the sugar-cane, and they get a very nice juice from the stem, of which they make sugar. Look at the people, in this picture. Are they like me ? No. Teacher ; they are very dark. We will talk, some day, about the country where the sugar-cane grows, and where the dark-colored people live. Now, you must tell me all you can find out, yourselves, about the sugar. It is sweet. You all know that. Repeat,—the sugar is sweet. Look, I have put a piece of the sugar in some water ; what do you see ? It melts. Look again ; I hold it to the fire of the candle. It melts. Repeat,—sugar melts in water, and in fire. Now, with respect to melting, how do lead and sugar differ ? Sugar melts in fire, and in water ; lead only in fire.

“* It may, or may not be, that the child of a plumber should be present at this lesson ; but if not, it must occasionally happen, that some have seen the materials brought before them, used by their parents, in their trades ; and, it is supposed here, that there may be amongst the children receiving the lesson, one whose father is a plumber, to show how a teacher should avail himself of such a circumstance.”

“† Perhaps they may have seen, and may remember, that church-windows are sometimes of this kind. The rule of the teacher should be, to let them bring forward just what has fallen within their own experience.”

Now, look at the sugar, and feel it, and tell me what you find out. It is hard. Well, and what more? It is white. Is all sugar white? No, there is brown sugar. Look at it, again. It is bright. Does it look bright, just in the same way that the lead looks bright? No, little bits of the sugar are bright. This is called sparkling; it is like little bright sparks. Repeat, together,—white sugar is sparkling. Well, try again. It is a lump. Is all sugar in a lump? No, not brown sugar. Did you ever see an uncut piece of white sugar, in a grocer's shop? What was its shape? Round. Was it all the way up, the same size? No, it got smaller and smaller, till it came to a point. What is the use of sugar? To sweeten tea. What besides? To sweeten fruit puddings; to sweeten our food. Now, you shall repeat the lesson. Sugar is made from the juice of the sugar-cane; it is *very sweet*; it melts *in fire*, and *in water*. Loaf sugar is *white, hard, and sparkling*; it is used to *sweeten our food*.

“LESSON IX.—MILK.—What is this, in the glass? Milk. How do we get milk? It comes from the cow. How can you tell, by looking at this, that it is milk, and not water? Because it is white. Have you any other reason for knowing that it is not water? We cannot see through it. Repeat, together,—milk is white, and we cannot see through it. Taste it. It is very nice. What kind of taste has it? Sweet. Repeat,—milk has a nice and sweet taste. Does it feel like water, in your mouth? No, it is soft. You have told me in what it is unlike water, now find out something in which it is like water. Look at me, (teacher drops some of the milk;) it will wet any thing; it comes in drops. What do we call whatever wets, and forms into drops? A liquid. What, then, is milk? Milk is a liquid. Tell me some other liquids. Water, beer, &c. What use do we make of milk? We drink it. Why are little children fed upon milk? To make them grow. Yes, it nourishes them. Milk is *very nourishing*. Do you know any other animals, besides the cow, that give milk? Yes, the ass, the goat. You can tell me, I think, why God gave animals milk. To feed their young. Why is milk particularly good for their young? Because it is so nourishing. How kind it is in God, to give animals such a nice, nourishing food for their young, before the little things have teeth to bite the grass. What is the young of the cow, called? A calf. Now, repeat all you know, about milk. Milk comes from *the cow*. God gives it to the *cow* to feed the young *calf*, when it has not teeth to bite the *grass*. Milk is *white*, and we cannot see *through it*; it tastes *nice and sweet*; it is *soft*; it is a *liquid*, and makes us very *nourishing food*.

“LESSON X.—I have brought you, to-day, the four things which you have had for your lessons, this week, that you may look at them together, and find out in what they are different, and in what they are alike. What are the four things? A feather, lead, sugar, milk. In what are the feather and the lead very different? The feather is light; the lead is heavy. Which comes next in weight to the lead? The sugar. Is the sugar heavier than the milk? Look, (teacher drops a piece of sugar and the feather, into the milk;) let the little children tell me,—what do you see? The sugar fell to the bottom; the feather is at the top. The sugar fell to the bottom, because it is,—what? *heavier than the milk*; the feather floats at the top, because it is,—*lighter than the milk*. Tell me something more, in which the lead and the feather are unlike. The lead melts; the feather will not melt. Which of these things will melt in fire, besides the lead? The sugar.* Is there any thing in which the sugar and milk are alike?

“* It is very important, when the teacher puts such questions to the children assembled in the gallery, that he should always require those who can answer the questions, to hold up their hands, that he may select one to answer. This prevents noise and confusion, and accustoms the children to exercise self-control. He will always keep up the interest of the children, if he presents the subject in such a way as will lead them to think.”

They are both white and sweet. Find out something in which milk and sugar are unlike. Milk is a liquid, and sugar is not. Is there any other liquid here, besides the milk? No. Try to find out something you can say, of all these things. We cannot see through any of them. Find out something in which the lead, feather, and sugar, are unlike the milk. They are not liquids, and the milk is. Find out something in which the milk and sugar are unlike the lead and the feather. The milk and sugar are nice to the taste; the lead and feathers are not good to eat. Sugar and milk are good for our *food*; feathers are useful to *stuff beds*; and lead is useful for *pipes, cisterns, &c.* Who gave us all these things for our use? What must God be? Very kind.

[For the Common School Journal.]

WEEKLY REPORTS IN SCHOOLS.

SIR.—Permit me, through the pages of your Journal, to offer some suggestions, with regard to a mode of exercising moral influence, in schools, which, as it appears to me, might be much more extensively and usefully employed, than it is at present. The time has been, when fear and emulation, if not the only motives felt in our seminaries, were nearly the only ones to which a direct appeal was made. But these incentives to action have declined in public esteem, while, as yet, it is not well ascertained, in what form others shall be best applied, to take their place. If we are to part with the stern but efficient discipline of former times, something else must be provided, to answer its purpose. It is not enough, to speak, in general terms, of moral influence. That influence must be brought to bear on the pupil, in some distinct and effectual manner; and it is well worth attention, to discover what modes are the most appropriate for its application.

Among all that I have found suggested, none has appeared to me more valuable, than the establishment of an understanding between the parent and the teacher, so that the influences of home may be felt in the school-room. One, whose attention had not previously been drawn to the subject, may well be surprised at observing, how little parents, in general, know of the actual behavior and proficiency of their children, at school, and how seldom, comparatively speaking, pupils feel the influence of a sense of responsibility to their parents, for what passes in the seminary. How easily can a teacher discern, by the difference in their recitations, by their punctuality of attendance, and their propriety of behavior, which of his pupils are blessed with parents who consider it their duty to coöperate with the instructor. Young persons, in general, regard so much the opinion of their parents, that the very consciousness, that the incidents of their school-hours were to be known at home, would exert, over most minds, a powerful control, though not a word of direct approval or disapproval should be uttered, in consequence of this knowledge.

In what way, then, is this feeling of responsibility to parents to be made available, in promoting diligence and good order among pupils? In what way can parents themselves be led to coöperate more fully, in the task of the teacher? The most obvious mode is, by sending more or less frequently, reports of the progress of the children and their deportment, to those who ought to have the deepest interest in these subjects. In some schools, the practice has been adopted of using printed forms, containing blanks, in which, by some system of figures or letters, the advancement and behavior of the pupil are to be expressed by the teacher. This mode was for some time in use by the writer of this communication; but was found subject to objections, which induced him to modify it essentially, and reduce it to that which it is his present purpose to recommend. The objections to which his former system was liable may have been owing to some peculiar defect in that system; but, to himself, they appear to lie, with

equal force, against most of the other modes of making out weekly or monthly reports, with which he has become acquainted.

The radical evil was a want of simplicity. By attempting to report too much, he failed of giving a clear impression to the mind of the parent. Every study which was pursued being set down, and the pupil's standing in each being denoted by figures, commendation and censure would be so blended together, that the preponderance of either could hardly be determined, without a more minute inspection than most parents would give. The writer found, accordingly, that, in some instances, a very incorrect impression had been received, at home, from reports in which he believed that a faithful representation had been made. The labor, too, of filling out, every week, full tables of the studies pursued by a number of pupils, added not a little to his burdens, and would, of itself, be an insuperable difficulty in the way of introducing such a plan into large public schools. Nor would the expense be trifling, though, even in its most defective mode, the good accomplished by such a system would be well worth, to the community, all that it could cost.

The writer was led, subsequently, to adopt a plan, the beneficial results of which have exceeded his anticipations, and which appears to him (at least, with some modifications) to be free from any of the difficulties which have been named. He procured a number of cards of different colors;—white, blue, yellow, and red. On these, respectively, he had printed the words, "Entire Approbation," "Approbation," "Indifferent," and "Censure," with the name of his school, and spaces, for the name of the pupil, and the date and number of the report. By this mode, the color of the card was itself an indication of its meaning, since the same colors were always used for the respective degrees of merit. He soon found a degree of interest shown by his pupils, in the cards they received, which they had never manifested, before, while his own labor was diminished, probably, three fourths; as all which was now necessary was, to write on each card the name of the pupil to whom it was to be given, with its number and date. The scholars are required to show the cards again to their instructor, with the signatures of their parents upon them; and, though this rule is not always rigidly enforced, it is sufficiently so, to render the arrangement well known to the parents, by whom it has been highly approved.

The chief objections to the introduction of such a system into general use are those of expense and trouble. The latter of these, trifling in itself, might be entirely obviated, by committing to some few of the pupils the task of filling out the cards, with the names and date. All that would then be necessary for the teacher, would be, to mark upon his list of pupils by the numbers, 1, 2, 3, and 4, or any other simple method, the description of card which he intended for each scholar; and, as they ought to be distributed by himself, very little care would suffice, to guard against fraud, on the part of his young clerks. The expense, too, would be very inconsiderable, as the tickets need not be larger than those used in steam-boats and on railroads, or the colored tokens of approbation which were formerly, and perhaps still are, given to children, in some Sabbath Schools. From these, indeed, the writer derived the idea of introducing cards of different colors. If such cards were printed in large quantities, with no other heading than the words, 'School Report,' so that they might be used by any teacher, they could, it is presumed, be furnished extremely cheap; and few teachers, who had tried an expedient of the kind, would question, that the good results are beyond comparison with the expense by which they are attained.

There is an advantage, beyond what has yet been suggested, in a plan like that described. The teacher, if conscientious, will feel gratified to know, that the parents of his pupils have an opportunity of watching the results of his instruction and discipline. He will be thankful for the check which this thought affords him, in aid of his good intentions, and in restraint

of the temptations to petulance or negligence, which a school presents. If, week after week, he is obliged to give to a particular pupil a bad report, he will feel, that something must be done, on his part, to remedy the evil, which is thus brought so distinctly before his own eyes, and which, he knows, must meet the observation of the parent. He will not be satisfied with himself, if he merely administers the summary remedy of the rod. He will be satisfied with nothing short of the amendment of his pupil ; such a change, as will enable him to send home, in regular succession, good and honorable testimonials to his behavior and advancement. The teacher must, indeed, be on his guard against partiality, and the disposition to suppress the truth, for fear of giving offence. But let him remember, that unfaithfulness here must be detected by its results.

If these suggestions should be deemed worthy of a place in your periodical, I trust, that, if not of much consequence in themselves, they may be the means of eliciting useful remarks from others, on the general subject with which they are connected ; that is, the means by which a moral influence may be exerted in schools.

S. G. B.

Washington City, March, 1840.

BEAUTIES OF IGNORANCE.

[A paper, printed at Tipperary, in Ireland, gives the following account of a case of superstition, and its melancholy consequences. There was no cruelty of purpose in this ; it was sheer ignorance, only.—ED.]

"A man of the name of James Mahony, who lives on the demesne of Heywood, the property of Mr. Charles Riall, had a son of the age of six or seven, a most delicate child. It appears the boy had been confined to bed, for two years, with an affection of the spine ; and, being a very intellectual child, and accustomed to make the most shrewd remarks about everything he saw and heard passing around him, his parents and the neighbors were led to the conclusion, that he was not the son of his father, but that he was a fairy ! Under this impression, a consultation took place, at the house of Mahony, and the result was, that the intruder from the 'good people' should be frightened away ; and, accordingly, on Tuesday night last, the poor, dying child was threatened with a red-hot shovel and a ducking under a pump, if he did not disclose where the real John Mahony was ; and so successful were the actors in their scheme devised for the expulsion of the fairy, that the feeble child, after being held near the hot shovel, and also having been taken a part of the way to the pump, told them, he was a fairy, and that he would send back the real John Mahony, the next evening, if they gave him that night's lodging. This occurred on Tuesday night last, and the child was dead, the next morning. When our active stipendiary magistrate, Mr. William Nash, heard of the matter, he immediately had four persons, named Pierce Whelan, James and Henry Beresford, and James Mahony, taken into custody, as being implicated in the unprecedented affair ; and, on yesterday, an inquest was held on the body, before Mr. William Ryan, coroner, when several witnesses proved the facts, as stated above, and said, they had seen the shovel prepared to a red heat, and the child placed over it, close enough to burn him. Mr. Nash said, that such a case of ignorance, cruelty, and superstition, should be exposed before the world. Dr. John Smith deposed, that the child was in a very debilitated state, for some time before its death ; that it labored under a curvature of the spine, and that the debility produced by the affection caused death. Ans. to Mr. Nash : If any thing was done that could cause excitement, when that excitement had subsided, a greater degree of debility may be super-

added, which would accelerate death. The investigation here closed, and the jury, after deliberating for about twenty minutes, returned a verdict of, 'Died by the visitation of God.' [The true verdict would have been, 'Died by ignorant parents.'—ED.]

[For the Common School Journal.]

CLASSICAL LEARNING.

Being informed from undoubted authority that Mr. Anthon's editions of the Classics, used in our higher education, as it is termed, produce him about seven thousand dollars, annually, I was reminded of the profits, I had heard were obtained in England, from the sale of Lempriere's Classical Dictionary. They were immense, though I have forgotten the exact statement; but I preserved, at the time, some remarks upon the fact. The writer, Sir Francis Head, (in 'Bubbles of Brunnen,') places in a striking light the absurdity of giving the most important place in education to classical learning, by which, says he, "the youth is made to study every thing that human ingenuity could invent to sully, degrade, and ruin, the mind of a young person." He proceeds to prove, that, when this learning has been most completely mastered, the knowledge of it is compatible with the grossest ignorance in matters of the highest importance. Charles II. touched twenty-three thousand and six hundred of his subjects, for King's Evil. Amy Drury, and her daughter, eleven years of age, were tried before Sir Matthew Hale, for witchcraft, and were condemned, by evidence of Sir Thomas Brown, one of the most learned men of his time. "The above degrading facts are moral tragedies; the audience was the British nation; the performers, the King on his throne, the bishops, nobility, physicians, and philosophers, of the day. If young people, instead of being taught to look at the ground under their feet, and the heavens over their heads, and the creation that lies all around them, are forced to study events that never happened; speeches that never were made; metamorphoses that never took place; and fables that misrepresent God's nature and government; can they fail to come short of the attainments that make a man truly wise?" We imagine that no other censure can fall upon classical education, than what applies to the misuse of it; to a false estimation of its relative importance. Under its best teaching, men, reputed wise, have believed in witchcraft; have put faith in a king's touch for the healing of disease; and, in the name of a mild and merciful religion, have burned the honest, faithful, and heroic, of their fellow-men, at the stake. Classical education does not give any information of the present state of mankind, explains no recent discoveries of science, nor any invention of art. It does not teach to measure the smallest field, nor develop the true economy of society. It imparts no knowledge of agriculture, and none of commerce; nor does it acquaint the subject with his own ignorance, but in fact often makes him satisfied with his acquirements as superior to those of common men, and inspires in him a contempt for those, who are only furnished with the knowledge indispensable for the conduct of ordinary life. Such consequences only arise from partial and exaggerated estimates of the dignity and uses of classical learning. It has great and valuable uses,—sharpening the intellect; enlarging the whole province of human thought; giving the history of all civilized men, in all ages; furnishing descriptive terms, in all science; teaching, by comparison, the progress of society and the providence of God. But all these uses are made available, by other knowledge, by improved reason, wide observation, superadded instructions;—by examination of all that is immutable, in Nature; and by cognizance of all that the perpetually-advancing mind of man has accumulated upon the wisdom, the invention, the industry, and the records, of the early ages.

E. R.

DANVERS 'REPORT.'

[We extract a few passages from the excellent printed Report of the school committee of Danvers. That town, for more than twenty years past, has been in the habit of requiring from their school committees an annual, detailed Report, in reference to the schools ; and, after this long experience, but one, and that the most favorable, opinion prevails, respecting the utility of the practice.

We invite particular attention to one of the suggestions below ; we mean that which recommends that a common writing book be prepared for each school ; that each *writing* scholar be required to write a line, or a few lines, therein, both at the opening and at the close of the school ; and that the book be then preserved until the next Winter, when the same thing shall be done ; and so on, from year to year. The suggestion, we believe, is entirely original, and it may be made useful, in furnishing an infallible criterion of the progress of each scholar, from year to year, and in preventing what, in some cases, is alleged to exist, namely, counterfeit, fraudulent, bad writing, at the commencement of the school, so as to make the improvement appear more marked and decided, than it really is. If a pupil begins, at each term of the school, by writing as poor a hand as he wrote at the beginning of the previous school, then he may appear to have made great proficiency, and win praise for himself and for the teacher, and yet, at the end of the school, leave off, substantially, where he left off the year before. A comparison, therefore, of his writing at the opening of one school, with that at the close of the previous school, is essential, in order to know how much he gains, each year ; and the plan suggested in the Report will furnish the means of making this comparison, and be a test both of the pupil's honesty and of his advancement.—ED.]

"The advantage of having all the schools examined by the same committee is such, that this arrangement should not be dispensed with, if it be possible to find gentlemen of requisite qualifications, whose engagements will admit of their attending to the duty. In this way, and in this way only, can a just estimate be made of the comparative conditions of the several schools ; in this way only, can a uniformity of discipline and of study be introduced. That an *exact* uniformity of study or of discipline should be adopted in all our schools is not to be expected or desired ; because the condition and circumstances of one school may be very different from those of another. But if one *general* course of management is preferable to another, or all others, and the committee have made a selection of this course, it is then desirable that the same should be regarded.

"In the appointment of a sub-committee, to visit *all* the schools, it was not intended to dispense with the services of the other members of the committee, in visiting the schools in their respective neighborhoods.

"This is a duty, from which they should not excuse themselves. We well remember, when the clergymen of the town felt themselves under as great obligations to attend the examination of the schools, as to be in their pulpits, on the Sabbath ; and we hope the example of the venerable Drs. Wadsworth, Walker, and others, in this respect, will never be forgotten.

"One of the first objects, that engaged the attention of your committee, was a selection of the books to be used in our schools. In the performance of this task, they found themselves fettered by the books already in use. To discard these, entirely, and substitute others, although they might be known to be decidedly better, would not do, as parents would not submit to be *taxed* for such an innovation. They were therefore brought to the necessity of selecting as well as they might from the books in use, providing that a limited number should continue to be used, and excluding those which were deemed least valuable. Such is the list they approved, with

the addition of a few others, that were much needed, or which, by their peculiar merits, were worthy of special recommendation. So numerous are our school books, and so constantly changing ; so various in their character and qualities ; that we are not by any means confident in the comparative value of our own selections. We endeavored not to approve any that we did not know to be *good*, reserving the right to substitute *better*, whenever they shall be presented.

" We had hoped, ere this, to have been guided in this matter by the labors of the learned Board of Education, established by the authority of the State, for which we entertain the highest respect, and to which we look for instruction.

" We know not what better service can be rendered by this Board, for the benefit of our Common Schools, than to cause suitable class books to be prepared ; or, if they will not produce new ones, to make a selection, from those already in existence, of such as are most valuable. Such a selection is much needed, and a recommendation from this Board, made upon due examination and deliberation, would be entitled to much respect, and would undoubtedly command it.

" For instance, suppose the study of English grammar is to be introduced : what text book shall be preferred, for this purpose, among the many dozen now before the public, each recommended by the author as possessing peculiar merits, and each puffed by the author's interested associates ? If we mistake not, there are about fifty different grammars now in use, in this Commonwealth, exclusive of the different editions of the same work, many of which are designedly made to vary from the former, for the special benefit of the trade, so that the various editions may not be used by the same class. Now, the science of grammar itself, if it be a science, is the same that it was fifty years ago. Why, then, so many variations in the path to approach it ? We cannot believe that all these variations are improvements ; and, until it is made certain by the judgment of those better qualified to decide than ourselves, we are disposed to abide by the *ancient landmarks*.

" The same remarks are applicable to the study of arithmetic. Every year brings in some new and *improved* method of learning the use of numbers. One would think, by looking over some of the new publications, that the old rules had become obsolete and useless. But how is the fact ? Do our youth better understand the principles now, than they did under the guidance of Pike, Walsh, and Webber ? If they do not, where, then, is the benefit of the new systems ? We are happy in the belief, that some of our best authors,—among whom we are proud to rank Greenleaf, of our own county,—are content to follow the old way, making here and there an occasional repair, and are willing to abandon the long talked of, but never to be found, royal path to this science.

" That the modern system of mental arithmetic, as it is called, is valuable, for very young scholars, we have not a doubt. We believe it one of the best methods of exercising and disciplining the young mind. We would recommend it, for this purpose, and think it one of the first studies to be attended to. But that this method, alone, is to be pursued, after the child has arrived at the age of ten or twelve years, we have much doubt. If, "by their fruits ye shall know them" be a safe rule to be applied, so far as our observations have extended in the examination of our own schools, we should be inclined to adhere to the old system.

" The *writing* in our schools has been an object of particular attention, the past Winter. We have long been apprehensive, that the method of teaching scholars to write *fine hand*, before they had attained a free use of the pen by writing a fair *copy hand*, or *coarse hand*, was of doubtful utility ; and we are fully confirmed in this belief. One of our first instructions in the schools was, to initiate the scholar in the writing of *coarse hand*, and to keep him

upon that, until he could write it fairly. In those schools where this direction has been observed, the benefits have been conspicuous. We have very little doubt, that the present deteriorated hand-writing in our schools, as compared with what it was fifteen years ago, is mainly attributable to a neglect of this rule. Another and perhaps not less important consideration is, the ability of the *teacher*, to write well. Because some few men of genius have been entirely inattentive to their hand-writing, or may have been willing to manifest their eccentricities in this way, it is considered, by some, who have their *conceit* without their *ability*, to be an indication of genius. But however this may be, to write badly is not a good qualification for a schoolmaster; and generally, it will be found that youth, at school, learn to write very nearly in proportion to the ability of the teacher in setting copies. The practice of giving slips to young scholars is often but an apology for not knowing how to set their copies.

"The committee have endeavored to obtain specimens of the writing in the several schools, but have not succeeded in all of them, according to their wishes. In some of them, their requests have been duly observed: in others, teachers have taken advantage of having been *requested*, instead of *directed*, and have but imperfectly complied therewith. We consider this one of the most essential exercises of our common schools, and think more care should hereafter be had, as to the ability of teachers, in this art, and that no one should be deemed qualified to take charge of a school, who cannot readily write a fair, handsome hand.

"In order to test the proficiency of the scholars, in this branch, we recommend that a sufficient number of suitable books should be procured, so that each district may be furnished with one, at the opening of the Winter school, and that each scholar may be required to write therein, at the opening and the close of the school. Let it be understood, that such a record will be made of the improvement of each scholar, each year, and that these books will be preserved by the committee, in continued remembrance of their ability, and it will serve as a stimulant to increased attention. The art of writing only requires *attention*, to be acquired with a good degree of elegance.

"The examination of the persons employed as teachers is one of the unpleasant accompaniments of the office of school committee; and it is one not unfrequently too imperfectly performed, on their part, and regarded of too little consequence, by the prudential committees. A thorough reform, in relation to the examination of teachers, should be introduced. No person should be entitled to receive pay for his services, without a strict compliance with the requisitions of the law. All teachers should be fully examined by a sub-committee, competent for the purpose, who should be together at the time of examination, and who should feel themselves individually responsible for the correctness of the certificate they may sign.

"The knowledge of the fact, that many, in years previous, and some, the last year, got into our schools, without having been properly examined, and without being properly qualified, should induce to greater vigilance. The fact is, there are so many who are willing to use our schools for their own benefit, and not for the benefit of the scholars, that much caution should be used in the approbation of teachers. We are fully sensible, that this part of our duty has not been properly discharged, in years past; and we are equally sensible, that, in the selection of prudential committees, various collateral considerations are often brought in, to have an influence, that ought not at all to be regarded. Those should be chosen, who feel an interest in the school, and who are both able and willing to perform their duty.

"Efforts are now making by the Board of Education, to have each school district furnished with a small library, for the use of the scholars; and a series of books is now in course of publication, under their direction, adapted to this purpose.

"Some inquiry has lately been made, as to the manner in which the money received from the Massachusetts School Fund should be appropriated. We beg leave to suggest the expediency of applying a part of it towards procuring libraries, in such districts as are ready to do something for themselves. Suppose the selectmen should be authorized to give each district twenty dollars of this money, in which the sum of thirty dollars shall actually be raised, within a year, and applied to the purchase of a library,—the fact to be proved by a certificate from the school committee,—how could this money be more beneficially appropriated? We do not need it to lengthen our schools, because we are able to raise enough for this purpose.

"The plan of the Board of Education is a good one, and worthy of the attention of the districts in this town. The contribution of one dollar by each of the voters, in their districts, would furnish an ample fund for the procuring of a library for the use of the school, for four years to come; and it would be hazarding little, to say, that, if they would voluntarily commence by taxing themselves in this manner, that is, only twenty-five cents per year, there would be generous individuals, in each district, who would add liberally to the donation. How could a few dollars be better appropriated, than by thus securing to the children around us, an inexhaustible fund of rational and intellectual amusement? Hundreds of dollars are annually contributed for the education of those at a distance, perhaps, because the name of having given is associated with the gift; when we are wholly unmindful of the wants of those around us, and of the opportunities of doing good, nearer home. How can our ambitious *young men*, not to say *women*, better distinguish themselves, than by starting a subscription paper, and laying the foundation for such a library in each of their districts?"

THE YOUNG WOLF.—A young Wolf, who had run away from his post, in an action with the troops of Duke Leopard, was brought up before the judgment-seat of his majesty, the Lion, and condemned, by the angry monarch, to receive twelve blows, and to lose one of his ears.

"That for me!" cried the culprit, and knelt down before him *þ* "for me, whose father once saved thy crown and life, in a perilous rebellion, and was raised to the highest rank in the realm, for his good conduct."

"You are right," said King Lion, smiling; "the son of such a father deserves to be distinguished from other criminals; so let him have four-and-twenty blows, and lose both his ears."

THE SUN AND THE NEGROES.—"Really, good Sun, you are sometimes too fierce!" cried the people of the warmest region in Africa; "only look, we are fairly burning up."

"Do n't let that put you out of temper, my friends," answered the god; "millions on millions of people, who live to the northward of you, would freeze to death, if I was to take away any of my rays from you."

IMPORTANCE OF THE COLLOCATION OF WORDS, IN WRITING, ILLUSTRATED.—The writer of a letter, which is now before us, wished to say, "We have two schoolrooms, one above the other, sufficiently large to accommodate three hundred scholars;" but he actually says, "We have two schoolrooms, sufficiently large to accommodate three hundred scholars, one above the other." What rooms, and what a pile!